



New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

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CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTING A REPORT OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT 7-8-2005

Four criteria must be met for CP&P to accept a report of child abuse or neglect:

- 1) The alleged child victim is a born child, under 18 years of age.
- 2) The alleged perpetrator(s) is the child's parent, guardian or other person in a caregiving role, who has custody or control of the child.
- 3) The child victim(s) was harmed or placed at substantial risk of harm, meeting criteria specified in the Allegation-Based System. (See [CP&P-II-A-2-200](#).)
- 4) There is a specific incident or set of circumstances that suggest the harm or substantial risk of harm was caused by the child's parent, guardian or other person having custody or control of the child.
 - i. Note: The phrase, "born child," applies to allegations of medical neglect of disabled infants who are born alive. See definition at [CP&P-II-C-5-125](#).

Other criteria apply when CP&P determines whether to accept a Child Welfare Service referral for agency intervention. See [CP&P-II-A-3-300](#).

ALLEGATION-BASED SYSTEM

3-20-2006

SCR categorizes CPS reports by "type" --

- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse

- Sexual abuse

Each "type" of child abuse/neglect is given a specific "description" in NJS from the Allegation-Based System. Investigation efforts are directed by the specific allegation.

Focus on impact to child, not parental behavior -- The Allegation-Based System focuses on the impact that an incident or series of circumstances has on a child. The system de-emphasizes parental behavior.

Each allegation has one or two designated code numbers, to depict allegation of harm:

- Code numbers between 1 - 50 designate "abuse."
- Code numbers greater than 50 designate "neglect."

Child abuse/neglect reports accepted at SCR are strictly limited to the following allegation types:

- Child Death -- Allegation of Harm #1/51
- Head Injuries -- Allegation of Harm #2/52
- Internal Injuries -- Allegation of Harm #4/54
- Burns -- Allegation of Harm #5/55
- Poison/Noxious Substances -- Allegation of Harm #6/56
- Wounds -- Allegation of Harm #7/57
- Bone Fractures -- Allegation of Harm #9/59
- Substantial Risk of Physical Injury/Environment Injurious to Health and Welfare -- Allegation of Harm #10/60
- Note: This category includes allegations that a child is being hurt, is in danger, or is at risk of harm due to domestic violence.
- Cuts, Bruises, Welts, Abrasions and Oral Injuries - - Allegation of Harm #11/61
- Human Bites -- Allegation of Harm #12/62
- Sprains/Dislocations -- Allegation of Harm #13/63
- Tying/Close Confinement -- Allegation of Harm #14
- Risk of Harm due to Substance Abuse (by the Parent/Caregiver or the Child) -- Allegation of Harm #15/65
- Torture -- Allegation of Harm #16

- Mental and Emotional Impairment -- Allegation of Harm #17/67
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases -- Allegation of Harm #18
- Sexual Penetration -- Allegation of Harm #19
- Sexual Exploitation -- Allegation of Harm #20
- Sexual Molestation -- Allegation of Harm #21
- Substantial Risk of Sexual Injury -- Allegation of Harm #22

Note: When assessing child-on-child sexual activity, see [CP&P-II-B-1-600](#).

- Inadequate Supervision -- Allegation of Harm #74
- Note: When questioning parental supervision in matters of child-on-child sexual activity, see [CP&P-II-B-1-600](#).
- Abandonment/Desertion -- Allegation of Harm #75
- Inadequate Food -- Allegation of Harm #76
- Inadequate Shelter -- Allegation of Harm #77
- Inadequate Clothing -- Allegation of Harm #78
- Medical Neglect -- Allegation of Harm #79
- Failure to Thrive (Non-Organic) -- Allegation of Harm #81
- Environmental Neglect -- Allegation of Harm #82
- Malnutrition (Non-Organic) -- Allegation of Harm #83
- Lock-Out -- Allegation of Harm #84
- Medical Neglect of Disabled Infants -- Allegation of Harm #85 (See N.J.S.A. 30:4C-11(d); policy at II B 401.)
- Educational Neglect -- Allegation of Harm #86

CLASSIFICATION OF CPS REPORTS -- INITIAL, SUBSEQUENT, RELATED INFORMATION

7-8-2005

The determination of who to assign an incoming child abuse/neglect report is based on whether there is prior history with CP&P. NJ SPIRIT links the current report/referral to the previous or current case, if any.

Each incoming report falls into one of the following categories:

- An Initial Report -- the first report involving the named child and perpetrator documented in CP&P files.
- If all previous reports have been expunged, the current report is considered an "initial" report.
- For CP&P, initial reports are assigned to a Local Office, based on the location of the child's/family's normal residence.
- A Child Protective Investigator investigates, under the direction of the assigned Supervisor.
- A Subsequent Report -- a report of a new incident of child abuse or neglect on:
 - A matter under investigation
 - A case currently active, open for services
 - A prior report and investigation, regardless of the investigation finding

Note: The report is a "subsequent report" if a participant -- child, parent/caregiver, or an adult perpetrator -- is known to CP&P files.

See [CP&P-II-C-5-100](#), One Worker/One Family Model, for details on determining assignment of a new CPS report on an open service case.

- **A Related Information Report** -- the provision of additional information by the original reporter regarding an assigned or a pending report, or the reporting by a second reporter of an incident that was previously reported. This category includes call backs and calls to SCR from persons who express concerns about matters currently under investigation.
 - Test -- To determine whether a call is related information or a new report of child abuse/neglect (i.e., a subsequent report), the SCR Screener asks him or herself, "Is this a new incident? Did something else happen?" If no, the call is a related information report, not a "new" CPS report.
 - A related information report can come at anytime; there is no time limit as to when a call

can be categorized as a related information report.

- Related information reports are not counted as "new CPS incidents" in SCR intake statistics.
- A related information report is forwarded to BOTH:
 - the assigned Worker/Child Protective Investigator and his or her Supervisor, and
 - the assigned Permanency Worker and his or her Supervisor for follow-up, as appropriate.

TYPES OF REPORTS -- CPS FAMILY, CPS IAIU, CPS OTHER 5-9-2011

SCR further categorizes child abuse/neglect reports based on the relationship between the child victim and the alleged perpetrator, including:

- **CPS Family Report**

A Family Report generally involves a formal or informal member of a child's family or household as the alleged perpetrator. This would include, but not be limited to, the following as the perpetrator of a CA/N incident:

- A parent or guardian
- A parent's paramour (i.e., boy friend or girl friend), whether residing in, or frequenting the home
- A relative, whether residing in, or frequenting the home (a grandparent, an uncle, a cousin, etc.)
- An older sibling, half sibling or step sibling (or a more mature or able sibling, in the case of a child victim with a disability)

The Local Office Responds -- SCR assigns CPS Family Reports to field staff in a Local Office for investigation. The office is determined based on the child's/family's normal residence.

Exception -- If the child resides in the home of a CP&P employee, SCR assigns the report to the Public Defender Conflict Investigation Unit for investigation as a "CPS Other" report (see below).

- **CPS IAIU Report --**

A CPS IAIU Report involves allegations of maltreatment by a person(s) who has control or custody of a child in an "institutional" setting or a family-based out-of-home placement setting. See IAIU Manual, Subsection [CP&P-II-A-5-200](#), for a listing of facility types.

This would include, but not be limited to, the following as the perpetrator of a CA/N incident:

- A foster parent, pre-adoptive parent, relative caregiver or other resource family care provider
- Staff at a residential center or group home
- A teacher, registered day care provider, or other professional who works directly with children

Note: If the facility is operated by DCF, the report is assigned to the Public Defender Conflict Investigation Unit for investigation as a "CPS Other" report (see below).

DCF IAIU responds -- Institutional Reports are assigned to Investigators in the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit (IAIU).

CP&P Special Response Unit (SPRU) Workers respond to institutional reports after hours, upon contacting IAIU After-Hours Supervisors. See [CP&P-IV-E-1-300](#), (IAIU) After Hours Response.

SCR makes notifications -- When transmitting an institutional report to a DCF IAIU Regional Office for assignment, SCR also makes notifications within CP&P, the Department of Children and Families, and to other outside entities, as required, based on the type of facility/program/provider. See [CP&P-II-A-2-200](#).

SCR puts resource family homes on suspension in NJS -- When an allegation is against a resource parent or adult member of the household, and the allegation concerns a foster child, pre-adoptive child, adopted child, child who is a relative, or the resource parent's own birth child, SCR puts the home on suspension, to prevent further placements

pending completion of the IAIU investigation.
See [CP&P-IV-B-6-700](#).

- **CPS Other Report --**

A "CPS Other" Report involves allegations that a child was maltreated by:

- A CP&P employee or former employee; or
- A person residing in the home of a CP&P employee.

- **Unique conflicts, case-by-case decisions --**

The following allegations may be handled as a CPS "Other" Report, determined on a case-by-case basis:

- The complaint alleges that an individual engaged in child abuse or neglect, and a CP&P investigation of that individual may create a potential conflict of interest for the Division.

PDCIU responds -- An "Other" Report is assigned to the Public Defender Conflict Investigation Unit, to ensure objectivity, proper handling, and avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

CP&P Office from another jurisdiction -- The PDCIU can recommend that a Local Office from another county or area be assigned the response.
See [CP&P-II-C-1-300](#).

SCR MAKES IAIU/OOL NOTIFICATIONS

11-22-2004

SCR is responsible for making required notifications --

Upon accepting a CPS IAIU Report, the SCR Screener, assisted by the Call-Floor Supervisor, notifies the identified offices within CP&P, DCF, and other entities, based on the type of facility, program, out-of-home care setting, or provider. SCR makes notification electronically, by forwarding copies of the CPS Report to the identified entities.

SCR makes notifications, as illustrated in the attached chart. Double-click here to view attached chart.

Licensing Violations -- The SCR Screener assigns the Department of Children and Families' Office of Licensing (DCF OOL) potential licensing violations, while also advising

other entities, as illustrated in the attached chart. Double-click here to view the attached chart.

RESPONSE TIME REQUIREMENT FOR FIELD OFFICE **1-14-2008**

See [CP&P-II-C-2-300](#), Timeframes for Initial Response.

DETERMINING NEED FOR "IMMEDIATE" RESPONSE **1-14-2008**

See "Determining the Need for an 'Immediate' Response" in [CP&P-II-C-2-300](#), Timeframes for Initial Response.

DISCRETIONARY OVERRIDE **1-14-2008**

See "Discretionary Override" in [CP&P-II-C-2-300](#), Timeframes for Initial Response.

GOOD FAITH EFFORT **9-8-2009**

See [CP&P-II-C-5-125](#), Good Faith Effort.

COURTESY INVESTIGATION **1-14-2008**

The immediate safety of a child must take precedence over the administrative determination of who in CP&P should be assigned the response, and how the response should occur.

Role for Secondary Office vs. Office of Supervision -- For "immediate response" situations, in which a child victim is physically located at present in a differing county than the county of residence (or in an area which falls outside the jurisdiction of the Local Office that supervises the open case), SCR will assign the report to the Local Office responsible for the jurisdiction where the child victim is now (i.e., the "Secondary Office," given a "secondary assignment"). That office is responsible for making in-person contact with the child victim.

The SCR Screener provides copies of the report to both the Office of Supervision and the Secondary Office.

Call Floor Supervisor approval -- Such a "courtesy" situation requires the SCR Screener to consult with, and obtain approval from, the SCR Call Floor Supervisor.

Office of Supervision leads -- The Office of Supervision (i.e., the Local Office responsible for the county where the child normally resides) takes the lead in the overall investigation.

Coordinate and negotiate response -- The two field offices coordinate and negotiate efforts, particularly when the counties border each other. Coordinate action to expedite the response, to assure the child victim is seen and is safe, and the allegations are investigated. The following parameters apply:

The Secondary Office cannot refuse to respond. The child victim must be seen by no later than the end of that work day, or good faith efforts made to establish contact, to assure his or her safety.

However, the Office of Supervision can negotiate to assume complete responsibility for making in-person contact with the child victim, and thus handle the entire investigation, provided that in-person contact is timely.

If unable to make contact with the child victim, the Office of Supervision is responsible for making good faith efforts to do so. (See [CP&P-II-A-2-200](#).)

If the investigation determines that the child cannot remain safely in the home, the Office of Supervision is responsible for facilitating out-of-home placement, assisted by the Secondary Office, when necessary.

See detailed policy at [CP&P-II-C-1-200](#), Determining Office of Supervision, and [CP&P-II-C-1-200](#) Temporary Residence at Time of Referral/Application.